BRIEF HISTORY

of

116TH

INFANTRY

29TH

DIVISION

From Oct. 4 1917

to

June 1st 1919

A BRIEF HISTORY *of the* 116th INFANTRY

29th DIVISION
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

October 4, 1917 to June 1, 1919

COL. F. L MINNIGERODE

LIEUT.-COL. SAMUEL G. WALLER

MAJOR W. A. STACK
Commanding First Battalion

MAJOR ALBERT S. BURNHAM
Commanding Second Battalion

MAJOR CHARLLS R. POLLARD
Commanding Third Battalion

Dedicated to the
Memory of

Our Beloved Comrades

Who resolutely and gallantly died for France
in proof of America's devotion to Liberty
and her fidelity to mankind, and in
tender sympathy to those now
overwhelmed with grief,
who gave them to Country and
submitted them to the will
of Providence

PRIVATE MARVIN C. JONES

No. 1287859

Youngest Soldier of the Regiment and Mascot of Company D.

Enlisted at Camp McClellan, Ala., February 21, 1918.

Born in Tazewell County, Va., March 28, 1903.

Served honorably with Regiment throughout its campaigns overseas.

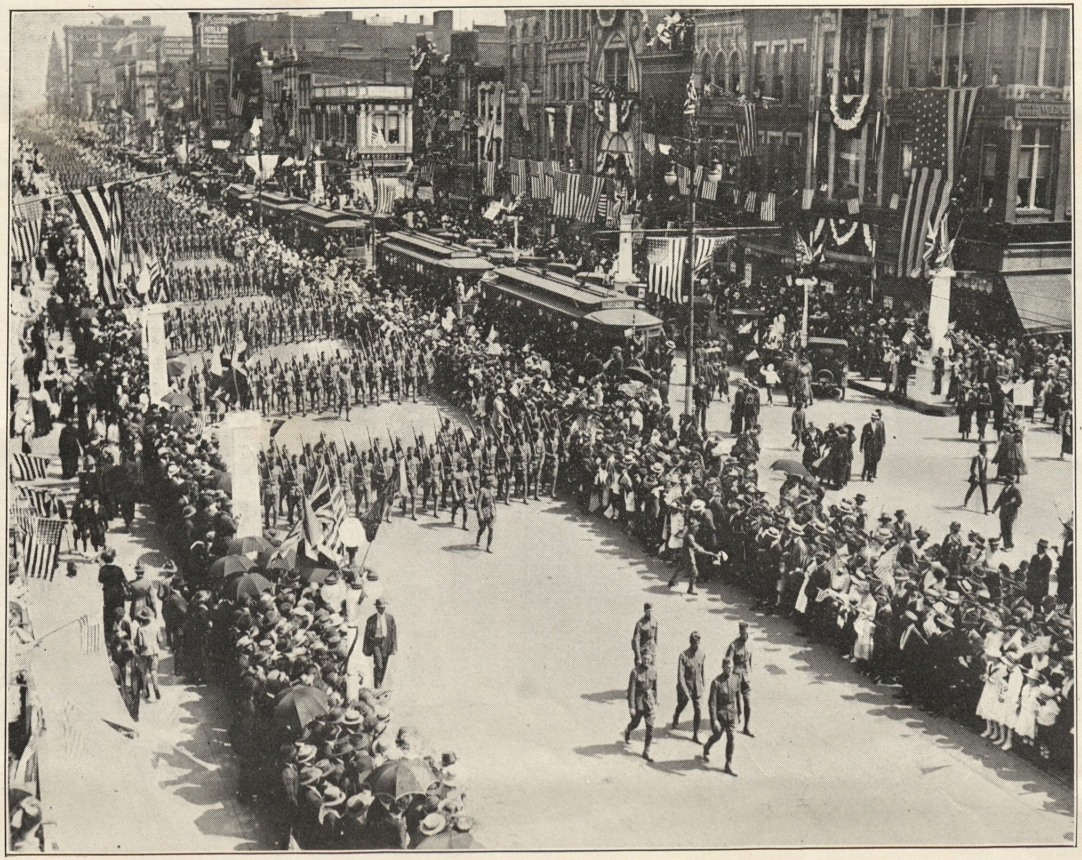
Wounded by shrapnel and gas during the assault on Bois D'Etrayes and Bois Belleu, October 25, 1918.

Repeatedly sent to the rear in charge of German prisoners by his "buddies" to be relieved from merciless fire delivered upon the front lines to which he would return as soon as he could discharge his responsibilities.

Always happy, brave and dependable; he was of the Army of Youth which conquered the Hordes of Shameful Conquest.

Into the early military life of this Orphan Soldier came the refined influences, the prayers and the patriotic devotion of a noble Virginia man and woman, Mr. and Mrs. Charles I. Lunsford, of Roanoke.

Who can read the destiny of this Hero Boy?



116th Infantry on Parade---Richmond, Virginia, May, 1919

"VIRGINIA'S OWN"

A Brief History of the 116th Infantry

29th DIVISION

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES,

MEURCE, FRANCE, April 26, 1919.

1. The 116th Infantry, United States, was organized October 4, 1917, pursuant to General Orders No. 7. Headquarters 58th Infantry Brigade, 29th Division, dated September 29, 1917, at Camp McClellan, Anniston, Ala., with a war strength of 105 officers and 3,686 men, as a part of the great army to combat Prussianism and to dissolve the House of Hohenzollern beyond the seas, when England was taxed to the utmost and France was expending her man power in the cause of self-preservation and the interest of humanity, and when our American President had already declared that Prussianism would be destroyed before America could entertain an honorable peace.

2. Virginia had responded to the call of the nation and sent forward promptly and without reserve her National Guard units: the 1st, 2nd and 4th Virginia Infantry Regiments, the Richmond Light Infantry Blues' Battalion, the Richmond Howitzers and the Norfolk Artillery—all of them with gallant records in the service of the United States, the majority of which had glorious traditions since the Revolutionary War, having participated in every struggle which the United States had been involved; for Virginia, though modest in grandeur, had never failed to support a cause that she believed was just.

3. Magnificently did those sons of noble sires of former days go forth to the field of hardships and horror; for those who loved them inspired them and believed that they would go unhesitatingly.

4. For nine months this regiment, composed of a personnel gathered from the entire State, trained at Camp McClelland under the disciplined mind and accomplished talent of Major-General Charles G. Morton, one gifted in the pursuits of war; a disciplinarian severeable and firm, who sought results and nothing less. It was a regiment finely trained in Musketry, Gas Warfare and the use of the Bayonet. It was a unit with a spirit of pride and loyalty which presaged its great deeds, soon in its life pledged to God, nation and the loved ones who gave it to the cause of Civilization. On June 11th the first step of the long journey was taken, and on June 15th it was aboard the U. S. S. Finland at Hoboken, N. J., prepared for a thirteen-day trip that lay before it. The night previous a great liner had been sunk near the mouth of New York Harbor by a German submarine of the number that "were seeking prey along the New England coast." Von Boehm was driving on Paris as the Allied armies gave ground, and it seemed that our great Allies who were throwing their whole resources against a powerful enemy "with their backs to the wall" would be compelled to abandon their positions, thereby necessitating the immediate entry into action of our troops upon their arrival overseas.

5. The convoy of thirteen ships, after a spectacular rendezvous at sea and many anxious moments, arrived at the Port of St. Nazaire, 27th June, 1918, without mishap, protected by the battleship North Carolina, and, during the latter part of the trip, by fourteen destroyers of the American Navy. The entry to that beautiful harbor was attended by French submarine chasers, mine sweepers, American seaplanes, captive balloons and dirigibles, in grandeur too beautiful and difficult to describe, and in history not to be surpassed. The hulls of three stranded transports and the recoveries of a mine sweeper just ahead revealed the dangers that confronted a safe arrival of the troops. After remaining in St. Nazaire at a former British camp for three days the Regiment proceeded to Argillieres, in the vicinity of Champlitte, passing through the cities of Nantes, Nevers, Bourges and Gray, where it was scheduled to remain for a period of four weeks' training, but, owing to the pressure upon the Allied front, moved early in July to Auxelles Bas, "thence in August to La Chappelle, thence to Reppe, thence to Brechaumont," thence to Reppe, during which period of time it occupied front-line trenches in the Haute Marne sector, Alsace. On August 26, 1918, one of its battalions (2nd Battalion) received a highly organized trench raid sent over by the enemy, believed to have been from the Mulhouse Schools, supported by fierce artillery barrage, at or about 4:30 A. M., which engagement lasted about two hours, at the end of which the enemy had been defeated and driven out with many losses and had left dead in our hands, as well as a vast quantity of trench-raid apparatus. The 116th Infantry had drawn the first German blood for the proud Division in which it served, and, moreover, had captured the first camouflaged German helmets that had been observed upon the western front. The brunt of this terrible engagement fell upon Company "F," which behaved gallantly and fearlessly in action. To use the words of Brigadier-General H. H. Bandholtz, commanding the 58th Infantry Brigade, "You damned Virginians fought like hell." Early in September it moved to Offemont, near Belfort; thence to Hargeville, thence to Souhsmes-La-Grande, and October 1st was bivouaced in Bois Bouchet as a part of the Army Reserve of the First Army, then driving in the Meuse-Argonne Counter-Offensive.

6. The operations west of the River Meuse having been held up by infilade artillery fire east of the Meuse, in the vicinity of Haumont Pres-Samogneux, on or about October 7th, this regiment was dispatched as a part of the 18th Division, 19th French Corps, and though having marched more than 110 kilometers within a few days previously, proceeded a distance of twenty-one kilometers on the night of October 7th and crossed the River Meuse at Charney, and occupied its base of departure in the vicinity of Samogneux with the 3rd Battalion, first line; 1st Battalion, second line, and the 2nd Battalion Reserve, at 4 A. M., October 8, 1918, with direction of attack "11 degrees Magnetic to Grid line 79—Verdun 'B' map." It attacked as part of the 58th Brigade (115th and 116th Infantry Regiments side by side), which, under orders from the French high command, was referred to "with splendid dash," and passing over the formidable works of Molbrouck Hill, continued therefrom in a northwesterly direction through Bois-de-Brabant-s-Meuse, Bossois Bois and Consenvoye to the south edge of the Molleville Farm, the normal objective, arriving there on schedule time, to-wit: "H" hour plus 7 hours and 30 minutes. This

advance was stubbornly resisted by numerous machine guns, many pieces of artillery of large caliber, anti-tank guns, gas shells and minnenwerfer, the majority of which last-named weapons fired 240s. October 15th the regiment accomplished the difficult task of capturing Molleville Farm and entering the Bois De La Grande Montagne, a region infested with machine guns, during which day alone it captured and destroyed twenty-six machine guns. In this attack the 3rd Battalion constituted the first line; the 2nd Battalion, the second line; 1st Battalion, the third line. On October 23rd, supported by auxiliary arms and all of the machine guns of the 29th Division (110th M. G. Bn., 111th M. G. Bn., 112th M. G. Bn., 115th M. G. Co., 116th M. G. Co., 113th M. G. Co. and 114th M. G. Co.), it executed the difficult problem of advancing eastward into the Bois d'Etrayes, capturing Hill 361 and Bois Belleu, and thus, in these environs, as stated by General Claudel, in General Order 135, 19th Corps French, "The Austro-Germans had lost on an arc of fifteen kilometers those arrogant observatories which had defied the heroic defenders of Verdun." To quote from the *Army and Navy Journal*, the report of General Marsh, "Those operations east of the Meuse resulted in the capture of the great guns that were infilading and holding up the drive of the 1st American Army west of the Meuse, thereby permitting it to advance on Sedan, and, moreover, the Germans were driven back beyond the line from which the Crown Prince launched his attack against Verdun in 1916, and which indisputably had remained in their hands until October 8, 1918." Having attained these heights, the Division had observation upon the enemy terrain in the direction of Etrayes for a distance of twelve kilometers, which enabled our artillery to fire accurately in that area and compelled the enemies general withdrawal. The regiment was relieved October 30, 1918, by the 79th Division, after a service of twenty-one days in a region poorly supplied with water, strategically fortified by the enemy, mercilessly pounded by artillery, under unfavorable weather conditions, scantilly supplied with food, and insufficiently protected by blankets and outer clothing; for these had been thrown aside by the troops during their unrelenting pursuit of the enemy. The regiment only makes modest claim to the great honor in the capture of more than 2,000 prisoners, 250 machine guns and 29 pieces of artillery of great caliber, including vast other war material. Its casualties during these operations consisted of approximately 1,500 wounded and 250 killed. It sustained the loss of one officer and three men captured by the enemy, since returned. During the operations of the Division, in which this regiment was employed throughout, four German divisions, one Austrian, one Bavarian, one Prussian and one Saxon, were withdrawn from its front.

7. On the night of October 29th it marched to Verdun, and on the following day was transported by motor trucks to Brillon, in the vicinity of Bar-le-Duc. On November 11th it was under orders as part of the 2nd Army to proceed to the sector south of Metz for its envelopment and siege when the Armistice was signed. On or about November 22nd the regiment moved to the 11th Training Area, with headquarters at Serqueux, in the vicinity of Bourbonne-Les-Bains, where it observed a heavy training schedule, irrespective of weather conditions, until 12 April, 1919, when it was moved to Le Mans, preparatory to transport to St. Nazaire for embarkation to the United States on the U. S. S.

Matsonia, which arrived at Newport News, Va., 20 May, 1919, in due time for the mammonth reception to "Virginia's Own" at Richmond, Va., 24 May, 1919, unquestionally that city's grandest and most touching tribute to Heroes.

8. The regiment had many commanding officers:

Colonel R. F. Leedy.....September 29, 1917, to January 1, 1918
Colonel H. L. Threlkeld.....January 1, 1918, to April 6, 1918
Colonel Wm. J. Perry.....April 6, 1918, to June 2, 1918
Lieutenant-Colonel Hobart B. Brown.....June 2, 1918, to July 5, 1918
Colonel H. L. Threlkeld.....July 5, 1918, to August 15, 1918
Lieutenant-Colonel Hobart B. Brown.....August 15, 1918, to August 21, 1918
Colonel J. A. Harris.....August 21, 1918, to October 10, 1918
Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. Kelley.....October 10, 1918, to October 31, 1918
Lieutenant-Colonel Chas. Bankhead....November 2, 1918, to November 12, 1918
Lieutenant-Colonel Chas. B. Finley.....November 12, 1918, to December 1, 1918
Colonel George W. Ball.....December 1, 1918, to April 25, 1919
Colonel Fitz Lee Minnigerode.....April 25, 1919, to June 2, 1919, date of muster-out of the Regiment at Camp Lee, Va.

9. The following Lieutenant-Colonels have served with the organization:

Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Rolfe Millar.....Front Royal, Va.
Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. Craighill.....Lynchburg, Va.
Lieutenant-Colonel Hobart B. Brown.....Newark, N. J.
Lieutenant-Colonel Chas. Bankhead.....U. S. Army
Lieutenant-Colonel Chas. B. Finley.....Elkton, Md.
Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzhugh L. Minnigerode.....U. S. Army
Lieutenant-Colonel S. Gardner Waller.....Front Royal, Va.

10. The following Majors have commanded battalions of the regiment:

Major F. L. Curdts .....Norfolk, Va.
Major Stanley W. Martin.....Lynchburg, Va.
Major George O. Leach.....Front Royal, Va.
Major Fulmer Bright.....Richmond, Va.
Major George L. Selby.....Newark, N. J.
Major H. L. Opie.....Staunton Va,
Major G. M. Alexander.....Lynchburg, Va.
Major Wm. A. Stack.....Richmond, Va.
Major J. C. Pollard.....Indiana.
Major Samuel G. Waller.....Front Royal, Va.

11. The following Captains have commanded companies of the Regiment:

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
Captain John W. White
Captain G. M. Harrison

MACHINE GUN COMPANY
Captain J. P. Ast, Staunton, Va.

COMPANY "A"
Captain H. L. Opie
Captain H. D. May
Captain L. N. Duffy
Captain E. W. Mooring

COMPANY "B"
Captain J. E. Peters
Captain Wm. A. Stack
Captain Lee Jarrell

COMPANY "C"
Captain H. W. Raines
Captain J. F. Dunn

COMPANY "D"
Captain S. G. Waller
Captain M. M. Goodwin
Captain Franklin Edwards
Captain Wm. McAndrews

COMPANY "E"
Captain Roland Thorp
Captain J. W. White
Captain J. L. Mitchell
Captain S. R. Millar, Jr.

COMPANY "F"
Captain Linwood G. Figgat

COMPANY "G"
Captain W. B. Davis
Captain A. S. Burnham
Captain J. L. Mitchell

COMPANY "H"
Captain J. B. Kaine
Captain A. S. Burnham

COMPANY "I"
Captain R. Y. Conrad
Captain J. E. Peters
Captain Harold R. Dinges

COMPANY "K"
Captain J. L. Mitchell
Captain Paul Hevener
Captain J. C. Gibson

COMPANY "L"
Captain G. M. Alexander
Captain R. Chas. McGhee
Captain Ewart Johnston

COMPANY "M"
Captain J. W. Wright
Captain E. H. Howe
Captain A. D. Barksdale
Captain Wm. McAndrew
Captain Thomas C. Holtzman

REGIMENTAL SURGEON
Major Giles B. Cook,
Front Royal, Va.

PERSONNEL OFFICERS
Major Frank P. Evans
Captain L. N. Duffy
1st Lieut. Cecil C. Vaughan
Captain Herbert May

ADJUTANTS
Captain S. Rolfe Miller, Jr.
Captain Roland Thorp
Captain Paul Hevener
Captain Jonathan C. Gibson
Captain John W. White

BATTALION ADJUTANTS
Lieut. Cecil C. Vaughan, 3d,
Franklin, Va.
Lieut. Samuel McKinney,
Lynchburg, Va.
Lieut. Beverley C. Wilkes,
Staunton, Va.
Lieut. Walter C. Gannoway,
Lynchburg, Va.

SUPPLY COMPANY
Captain James Cearny
Captain Wm. A. Stack
Captain M. B. Hutton
Lieutenant Wm. D. Leach

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
Captain Harry F. White
Lieutenant Fred Vosbourgh
Captain Wm. O. Hearn
Captain R. P. Stickley
Lieutenant A. H. Krohn
Lieutenant Wm. D. Sayre
Lieutenant Henry B. Dorr
Lieutenant A. B. Platter
Major Roy G. Strickler
Lieutenant Vaughn Maxwell
Lieutenant Dabney Minor
Captain E. S. Turner
Captain B. T. Daggy

CHAPLAINS

Chaplain Wm. J. Alfriend
Chaplain D. M. Bulla
Chaplain P. B. Paukstis
Dr. Alfred Clark Wilson

—served with this organization and rendered valuable services.

Chaplain J. M. Bulla—a brave, sympathetic, lovable and God-fearing man, gave his life in the attack against Molleville Farm.

12. The regiment established the following headquqarters in France:

St. Nazaire
Argillieres
Auxelles
La Chappelle
Reppe
Brechaumont
Reppe
Offemont
Hargeville
Souhesme La Grande
Bois Bouchet
Samogneux
Ormont Ravine
Death Valley
Molbrouck
Consenvoye
Molleville Farm
Verdun
Brillon
Foucheres
Serqueux
Marolles les Braults
St. Nazaire

13. The report of G-3, 29th Division, gives precisely the battle record of the regiment, to which reference is hereby made. (Obtainable at War Department, Washington, D. C.)

14. The regiment was especially complimented by the Commanding-General, American Expeditionary Forces, for march discipline going to and returning from the front, and the many letters of testimonial from Generals of high rank already form a part of the records of the organization. Perhaps the greatest compliment paid the regiment since its return from the front, during the course of its strenuous training, came when it was selected as the representative regiment of the 29th Division and the A. E. F. by General John J. Pershing to parade at Chaumont, France, in honor of Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies, and his magnificent staff, when America was bestowing her decorations of war upon the eminent sons of Great Britain in recognition of their glorious deeds and in appreciation of her assistance in the world war. On this occasion the organization was transported from Bourbonne-Les-Bains to Chaumont, many kilometers, by motor trucks; and again this regiment was selected as the representative organization of the 8th Corps to demonstrate a regimental fire problem, employing the Turtle Back formation, the most recent tactics and the use of all auxiliary arms to one of the armies now in France; and further, evidential of its efficiency and preparedness, it was held for a very few days at Le Mans, and, as a part of the 29th Division, was returned to America almost two months in advance of its schedule.

15. The official statistics compiled by Grand Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, at Chaumont, soon to be filed with the War Department at Washington, will truly recite the illustrious deeds of the regiment charged with perpetuation of the glory of the Mother State from which it came; but no mortal can safely attempt to detail the acts of individual gallantry and heroism of those among the *proud machine* who "never flinched in battle" or "gave up an inch of captured ground" to the Hun, and who were inspired and always led forward by the example and conduct of Captain Robert Y. Conrad, of Winchester, Va., and First Lieutenant Herbert H. Holleman, of

Suffolk, Va., the first officers, and Corporal Herbert W. Fowlkes, of Roanoke. Va., the first enlisted man to pay the great price that the World might be made a safe and decent place to live in—and that the weak should not be oppressed by the strong.

16. To those who gave their lives so freely a small, but I am told, lovely garden at Consenvoye, on the east of the great River Meuse, offers to the world a spectacle beautiful and grand; a proof of American loyalty and devotion to a cause; a dear and quiet spot to which all pilgrims and fellow-comrades may some day travel with some fit token of love, admiration and devotion, that it may be laid upon those quiet and consecrated graves in memory of our fallen heroes, and as an inspiration which our great country must perpetuate if it shall endure. There, and only there, life proves that death has no sting—that death can have no victory—that our fondest hope should be to die in the vigor of manhood and youth, boldly advancing in battle in the cause of Christianity, which must be preserved and forwarded upon the face of the Globe.

SAMUEL G. WALLER,
Lieutenant-Colonel 116th Infantry, Historian 116th Infantry.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

France, 2 April, 1919.

MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES G. MORTON,
Commanding 29th Division, American E. F.
My Dear General Morton:

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you and the officers and men of the 29th Division my compliments upon the showing made at the review and inspection on March 24th, and at the same time to commend all ranks for the services they have rendered while in France.

Though brief, your fighting record is one of which all may be proud. Arriving in France late in June, 1918, the division's period of training behind the line was cut short and one month later was put into the Alsace sector, thereby relieving veteran divisions for the battle. At the beginning of the great Meuse-Argonne offensive it was moved into the line east of the River Meuse. While the division remained in the Corps Reserve, the 58th Infantry Brigade, operating under orders of the commander of the French 18th Division, made a surprise attack on the 8th October, capturing Malbrouch Hill. From October 10th until October 23rd the division took part in a series of advances to the depth of seven kilometers, taking Grand Montagne and the Ridge Detrys. These positions were consolidated for a further advance when, on October 30th, the division was relieved by the 79th Division.

It was gratifying to see your troops in such good physical shape, but still more so to know that the moral tone of all ranks is so high. I am sure that this fine condition will continue to the end of their service and beyond as an examplification of their high character and soldierly qualities. Please extend to them my congratulations and my hearty thanks for their splendid work.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) JOHN J. PERSHING.

1st Ind.

Headquarters, 29th Division, American E. F., 11 April 1919. Copy to all organizations, including company commanders.

1. For their information:

By command of Major-General Morton:

GEORGE SCOTT STEWART, *Adjutant-General,*
Adjutant.

29th An "ASSAULT DIVISION"

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS, AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

France, 15 February, 1919.

FROM: *Major-General C. P. Summerall, Commanding Fifth Army Corps, American E. F.*

TO: *Commanding-General 29th Division, American E. F.*

SUBJECT: *Appreciation of Services.*

1. In accordance with orders from Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, the 29th Division is relieved from the 5th Corps.

2. The division was assigned to the corps on November 24, 1918, and since that date it has been constantly occupied with intensive training. While the work has been arduous and at times involved much discomfort in severe cold and inclement weather, the response has invariably been cheerful, zealous and effective. The progress of the division has been such as to evince a superior state of discipline and morale. At the conclusion of its service in the corps it is worthy of classification as an assault division.

3. The Corps Commander takes this opportunity of communicating to the officers and soldiers of the division his high commendation and admiration for the manner in which they have conducted themselves while in the 5th Corps. It has been an honor to command such troops, and in the training area, as well as in the stress of battle, they have shown themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them by their country.

(Signed) C. P. SUMMERALL.

HEADQUARTERS 29TH DIVISION, AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

1 *November*, 1918.

GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 59.

Now that its part in the action north of Verdun is finished, the Division Commander wishes to take occasion to express his deep appreciation of the skill, endurance and courage shown by the officers and men of the division, including both staff and line, in a most difficult and prolonged fight.

Everything was opposed to our success. We had a most determined enemy in our front and one skilled by four years of warfare, whereas this was the first real fight of our division. On most days the weather was bad and the ground difficult, added to the fact that the fighting was largely in woods. On account of the woods, ravines and dampness, gassing of our troops was easily accomplished, and full advantage of this fact was taken by the enemy, to whom the use of gas was an old story.

Without exception, the organizations of the division and their commanders responded heroically to every call upon them, and at the end of the fight we had not only gained our objectives, but we held them and turned them over to our successors. We advanced some eight kilometers through the enemy's trenches and captured over 2,100 prisoners, 7 cannon, about 200 machine guns and a large quantity of miscellaneous military property. We had the pleasure of seeing two hostile divisions withdrawn from our front, one of which was composed of some of the best troops of the German army. On many occasions captured prisoners stated that our attack was so rapid and our fire so effective that they were overwhelmed and had nothing to do but to retire or surrender.

In this brief summing up the results of its first fight the Division commander feels that every officer and man participating, whether in planning or in executing, should feel a just pride in what has been accomplished. This is but repeating the praise that has been bestowed upon the division by both American and French superior commanders.

By command of Major-General Morton:

S. S. CLOMAN,
Colonel of Infantry, Chief of Staff.

Official:

HARRY COOPE,
Adjutant General,
Adjutant.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
PROVOST-MARSHALL-GENERAL'S OFFICE
A. P. O. 706

17 *March*, 1919.

COLONEL GEORGE W. BALL,
116th Infantry.

My Dear Colonel:

Your note of the 14th instant enclosing my accumulated mail received, and please accept my thanks for the favor.

I wish to congratulate you on your good fortune in having been assigned to the 116th Infantry. I know the regiment from its organization at Camp McClellan. In spite of many vicissitudes, it always improved steadily in discipline and efficiency. The personnel left their two months' trench warfare in Alsace veterans to all sorts of hostile fire—high explosive and shrapnel, gas, machine guns, sniping, and even a projector attack.

Shortly after the commencement of the October offensive against the Grande Montagne I was fortunate enough to be placed in command of the 116th Infantry. After capturing a sector of trenches held by Austrians, the regiment forced its way through the Consevoye Woods, took the Molleville Farm, occupied a line along the crest of the Grande Montagne—and held every foot of ground captured. The enemy overcome were successively Austrians, Saxons and then Prussian Guards.

During those three weeks the fighting along the front line was constant. High explosive, shrapnel and machine-gun fire searched the woods occupied by the support and reserve battalions. The underbrush was filled with gas. Hostile artillery, aided by aircraft, struck down the personnel around the company kitchens. From personal reconnaissance I know how the spirit of officers and men remained ever nonchalant and cheerful and unflinching, in spite of constant casualties and an increasing fatigue that approached the limit of physical endurance.

We were relieved at the end of October. At Brillon I was finally forced to yield to the effects of Boche gas and enter the Base Hospital at Revigny. This I did with greatest reluctance, as I feared it would sever my connection with this splendid regiment.

After four months on sick report I am again on duty—but not with a regiment.

It is no small honor to have commanded a regiment of American infantry in battle—and this honor is increased to the maximum when the regiment is composed of men who won their objectives against bitter opposition, advanced across open fields and through thick woods, suffered without flinching casualties far beyond the traditional breaking percentage, defeated Austrians, Saxons and Prussian Guard, and held all the ground gained.

May I ask you to express my appreciation to the 116th Infantry for the unquestioning and unflinching response to all orders received while under my

command. The regiment lived up to the best traditions of the United States Army. I shall never forget the peculiar tie that binds me to each officer and man—we have been together in battle—in a regiment that made good—the 116th Infantry.

Very truly yours,

R. H. KELLEY,
Colonel of Infantry, United States Army.

Headquarters, 15 October, 1918.

19TH ARMY CORPS,
General Staff, First Bureau.

GENERAL ORDER No. 135

Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the 29th I. D., U. S. A.:

You have captured la Wavrille, les Bois des Caures and le Bois d'Haumont; you have attained the summit of Ormont and passed beyond Richene and le Bois de Chaume.

The Austro-German has lost, on an arc of fifteen kilometers, those arrogant osbervation posts which had defied the heroic defenders of Verdun.

The 8th of October you advanced, with magnificent dash, over formidable glacis and across powerful and deep organizations.

The following days you continued an obstinate advance which overcame all the counter-attacks of the enemy. You obliged him to call in great haste upon numerous reinforcements, which did not succeed in taking an inch of terrain.

Five thousand prisoners, more than fifty guns, machine guns and material not yet counted are the results of those fine days.

You all—infantrymen, artillerymen, sappers, aviators, general staffs and services—have your part in the successes.

American soldiers, French soldiers, you have vied with each other in the valor and the comradeship of the battle to loosen the bonds that still binds the immortal city.

I am proud to have commanded you.

(Signed) CLAUDEL.

COLONEL F. L. MINNIGERODE'S REPLY TO GOVERNOR DAVIS' ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO THE 116TH INFANTRY AT RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, MAY 24, 1919

There are some things that I desire to say to Virginia's Governor in behalf of the Virginia troops. I feel that I can talk to you, Governor Davis, with more freedom, due to the fact that my remarks can in no way be attributed to boastfulness or said in a spirit of egoism, because it was not my privilege to serve in battle as a member of this regiment, but I was privileged to command a regiment which fought side by side with them, and I feel that I know thoroughly their many deeds on the field of battle. Let me say to you

first that there is not one thing in the entire history of this regiment that Robert Edward Lee or Stonewall Jackson would not be proud of.

The men of the Blue and Gray Division were assigned the task by the French high command which was deemed the most difficult in the entire western front, north of Verdun, where the 29th Division made their attack. The enemy had, during a period of four years, concentrated undreamed-of quantities of heavy guns. They had had four years in which to prepare the position against any eventualities. Verdun! Do you remember the wonderful slogan adopted by the French when the Crown Prince was launching his tremendous attacks against Verdun in 1916—"*On Ne Passe Pas*" ("*They Shall Not Pass*"). Does it not give you a thrill when you think of this wonderful spirit of the French? But I want to say to you, Governor Davis, and to all Virginia, that the slogan which was deep in the heart of every one of these Virginia men was far more splendid, far more sublime, far more immortal, than those words of the French. Let this slogan sink deep into your heart, and remember it, "*They Shall Go Back.*" And back they went—Austro-Hungarians, Saxons and the much-vaunted Prussian Guards reeled before the attack of these Virginia men; and they went back, not 200 yards on a 300-yard front, or 500 yards on a 1,000-yard front, but they went back seven miles on a fifteen-mile front, and, as God is my judge, I believe, had not our own high command stopped us, that they would have been going yet. No troops in the history of the world were ever given a more acid test than were given the troops of the Blue and Gray Division in twenty-one days of continuous battle, and that test showed that in value these men were not fourteen karat or sixteen karat, but that they were pure gold, and, in stamina, the hardest steel.

Many of these Virginia men shall never return; it is due them, and I know it is Virginia's wish, that we revere their memory. Let us always bear in mind "that there is a corner of a foreign field that is forever Virginia." Those who stand before you to-day have come back with a full consciousness that they have taken a mighty part in a mighty world redemption; they have come back with a luster that Virginia's blood and Virginia's courage still runs true to her noblest traditions.

I now want to speak to you, my fellow-soldiers. "We must bear in mind that we are living in a nervous and uncertain world; we must bear in mind that peace hath its victories no less glorious than those of war; we must bear in mind that there are great things to be done—and we, my fellow-soldiers, must do them. It is due our fellow-comrades that we forever keep green their memory; but we must not live in the past—we must live to-day and look forward to to-morrow; we must remember (I have read these words somewhere) "that America is the Daughter of Nations and has inherited the riches of them all; she stands midway between the dim old glory of China and the recent splendor of France and England; in her the sun sets and the morning mingle; she is the last speaker in the drama of history; the valedictorian of time; she will be the heroine of power's last catastrophe, and when she is done oblivion's curtain falls; her very heraldry is full of high suggestion; her emblem is an eagle; her flag line a scrap of the mid-night sky blossoms with stars; eagles and stars belong near the sky, yes, and she will take them home if glory's wing can lift her there—God bless and keep you all."

FRONT ROYAL, VA., August 4, 1919.

Officers and Men of the 116th Infantry:

Through the endeavor of Captain John W. White, former Adjutant of the Regiment, it has been made possible to publish and distribute the Official Brief Record of the Organization to each member of the Old Fighting Machine, free of cost.

Major George M. Alexander, of Lynchburg, Va., and I were appointed the official Historians of the Regiment while in France, and both of us have been recently Commissioned Contributing Members of the Virginia War History Commission, by authority of the Governor of Virginia, to compile and preserve Historical Data relative to the Great State's participation in the World War.

With this responsible duty before us, and with the contemplation of the personal pleasure of publishing an Enlarged History at a later date, it will be greatly appreciated if every soldier to whom this pamphlet is delivered will mail to me at Front Royal any data, copies of official papers or stories of individuals by name.

Tell the story in your own way of any incident occurring between the date of your entry into the service and your discharge.

With best wishes and warm personal regards, I am,

Very sincerely,

SAMUEL G. WALLER,
Lieut. Col. Infantry.

THE WILLIAM BYRD PRESS, INC., RICHMOND, VA.